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NEWS CONFERENCE

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AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH PIERRE SALINGER

OCTOBER 29, 1962

11:20 AM EST

MONDAY

MR. SALINGER: I called this briefing for the sole purpose of reading a short statement and we will go ahead with the regular briefing at noon.

Q. From whom, sir?

MR. SALINGER: This is a White House Statement.

"The President has established a coordinating committee to give full time and attention to the matters involved in the conclusion of the Cuban crisis. The committee will be Chaired by John J. McCloy, of the United States Mission to the United Nations. Its other Members will be George Ball, Under Secretary of State, and Roswell Gilpatric, Deputy Secretary of Defense. The Members will act under the supervision of the three Cabinet Members concerned, Secretary Rusk, Secretary McNamara, and Ambassador Stevenson, and will report to the President."

I will just add that Under Secretary Ball and Deputy Secretary Gilpatric left immediately following the conclusion of the Executive Committee of the National Security Council at 11 o'clock this morning to go to New York, to join Mr. McCloy, who is already there, and to become operative in New York.

Q. This doesn't mean they will stay up there until Mr. U Thant leaves, does it?

MR. SALINGER: Well, they are going to stay during the time when these discussions are being held in the UN on implementing the letters between the President and Chairman Khrushchev.

Q. That could go more than a day, then?

Q. You say it is a coordinating committee. But will he be in charge --

MR. SALINGER: This committee will be in charge, as the statement says, of coordinating the matters involved in bringing this crisis to an end.

Q. Do you mean specifically coordinating the matters involved at the UN?

MR. SALINGER: Coordinating the current discussions which are going to be held in the UN in implementing the letters sent back and forth between the President and Chairman Khrushchev.

Q. Does this mean that he is Kuznetsov's opposite number?

MR. SALINGER: I don't know whether he will be physically the one who sits down with him or not. That I can't tell you.

Q. You say they report to the President?

MR. SALINGER: They will be under the supervision of these three Cabinet officers and report directly to the President.

Q. Do we consider Ambassador Stevenson a Cabinet officer.

MR. SALINGER: He is with Cabinet rank, that is correct.

Q. Will an opposite number be assigned?

MR. SALINGER: The Committee will determine that. The Committee, working under Secretary Rusk and Secretary McNamara, will make that decision.

Q. Will they go with U Thant?

MR. SALINGER: I can't answer that question.

Q. Has the National Security Council finished its work?

MR. SALINGER: It has finished its work for this

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Q. When you say it finished its work this morning, you meant for this morning?

MR. SALINGER: For this morning. I made that clear.

Q. Did Ball and Gilpatric meet with the Committee?

MR. SALINGER: They were with the Committee this morning, yes.

Q. How long did the Committee meet this morning?

MR. SALINGER: About an hour.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END